

Rivendell School Parent Handbook 2024-25

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Letter from the Head of School

Dear Rivendell Families,

We are so happy that you've chosen Rivendell School! We look forward to all that this year has in store. This handbook will help you understand Rivendell's policies, procedures, and guidelines, as well as promote a spirit of cooperation between Rivendell parents and Rivendell staff.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact our front office or your child's teacher. We are always happy to help!

Sincerely,
Holly Warren
Rivendell Head of School
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Rivendell School Staff

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About Rivendell School

Rivendell School Background and History

Rivendell School was founded in 1976 by Bob and Terry Wentsch. The seven original families developed Rivendell as a private non-profit and loosely modeled it after the British Infant School philosophy. From the beginning, Rivendell provided an alternative to the public school system with an emphasis on multi-age groups and individualized instruction. Over 40 years later, their vision continues.

Along with Bob and Terry, Carol McLean was instrumental in nurturing both generations of children and the Rivendell philosophy. She joined the school as the third teacher in 1977 and continued to teach until her retirement in 2006. When the Wentsch's left in 1993, Kate Duncan became the second administrator in the school's history. Kate served as principal until Spring 2013. Today, the staff of dedicated classroom teachers, specials teachers and office staff, led by Rivendell's current Head of School, Holly Warren, continue the tradition of individualized instruction and is proudly the oldest secular independent elementary school in Northern Colorado.

Starting humbly in a rented house in Fort Collins, Rivendell leased space from Trinity Lutheran Church from 1980 until 2000 when the school found its present location at 1800 East Prospect Road. Converting a former utilities warehouse into a schoolhouse is an ongoing but extremely satisfying adventure. Having a permanent home has increased Rivendell's ability to help hundreds of children begin the journey of realizing their personal potentials and becoming well-educated, imaginative, civil, responsible, and contributing citizens.

After four decades, Rivendell School still holds a significant place among the schools in this and surrounding communities. History has proven, through the successes of hundreds of alumni, that providing a place for children to grow, thrive and fall in love with learning has a lasting effect.

“Rivendell is the perfect house, whether you like food or story-telling, or just sitting and thinking best, or a pleasant mixture of them all. Merely to be there was a cure for weariness, fear and sadness.”

—J.R.R. Tolkien

Accreditation

Accreditation is a voluntary method of quality assurance developed by American schools and universities. It is designed to ensure institutions adhere to high educational standards.

The accreditation process also helps Rivendell assess its programs, processes and curriculum and allows us to make changes to achieve our goal of excellence in education.

Rivendell School is accredited by [Cognia](#) formerly known as AdvancedEd. The Accreditation Process, a protocol embraced around the world, is a clear and comprehensive program of evaluation and external review, supported by research-based standards, and dedicated to helping schools, districts and education providers continuously improve.

Our Philosophy and Mission

At Rivendell School we strive to help children achieve academic and personal excellence through individualized learning.

Rivendell School's individualized approach to education—a proven method for increasing subject mastery—focuses on the progress of each child rather than on the class average. Each student is constantly evaluated, challenged, and encouraged to perform to his or her full potential. Engaging every individual in the learning process produces the best results for each student.

At Rivendell, we believe that:

- Each child is unique.
- Academics are a function of ability, not age.
- As children work and learn different academic skills, these concepts are to be mastered and internalized.
- Concepts need to be mastered, because further acquisition of knowledge and skills is based on previously mastered concepts and skills.
- In order for children to become lifelong problem solvers, each child must experience the process of formulating answers to academic and social problems and test these in a safe environment. Through this process they learn how to make better choices, and like the proverb, learn “If at first you don't succeed; try, try, again.”
- Learning is a cooperative effort of the child, teacher and parent. Throughout these interactions, respect of the individual is modeled and learned.

Our Rivendell graduates are self-motivated, organized learners who are well equipped to take on the challenges of secondary school—and beyond—both academically and socially. Rivendell School is Northern Colorado's most well-respected elementary school-of-choice.

Non-Discrimination Policy

Rivendell School does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, national origin, disability, genetic information, sexual orientation or any other basis protected by federal, state or local laws in any educational program or activity sponsored by the school.

Visitor Policy

All visitors must enter through the front doors on the east side of the building and check in at the office. The office is closely monitored during the drop-off and pick-up time and parents must be buzzed into the front office between the hours of 9:00 AM and 3:00 PM. The peripheral doors are locked at all times.

Individualized Learning at Rivendell

From the beginning, Rivendell School has had a philosophy of addressing each individual child's academic needs based on skills rather than the grade-level based expectations of the public school system.

Key to Rivendell's curriculum are:

- [Individualized instruction](#)
- [Multi-age classrooms](#)
- [Small class sizes](#)
- [Interdisciplinary thematic units](#)
- [Creative learning](#)
- [Strength-based learning opportunities](#)
- [A whole-child focus](#)

Through the dedication and skills of our gifted staff, each Rivendell student is:

- Given a personalized course of instruction that challenges his/her ability;
- Helped to develop critical thinking skills;
- Encouraged to meet high expectations at a pace that is developmentally appropriate for each individual;
- Personally invested in the process of subject mastery;
- Nurtured within an intentionally multi-cultural, family-style setting that promotes cooperation and respect;
- Recognized as a valuable individual;
- Provided with opportunities to strive for their personal best;
- Challenged to view the world community with wonder and excitement through programs in core academics, foreign language, fine arts, computer sciences, physical education, and cultural awareness;
- Allowed to grow—academically, socially, and emotionally—within a safe environment that celebrates the experience of childhood.

Individualization means that each child will be given work at their own learning level and will be allowed to progress at the pace which the child requires in order to feel both successful and challenged. Reading and math are taught one-on-one and in small groups. Other topics may involve the whole class, with individual strengths and weaknesses addressed in written work.

The goal is to help children appreciate their different learning styles, while meeting the challenge of honoring the contributions of everyone in the group. Respect and love for learning fit directly into the vision of the school.

Multi-Age Classrooms

In multi-age classrooms, students have more freedom to be who they are. It is the perfect structure for individualized learning as it addresses both the academic and social/emotional needs of young learners. Multi-age classrooms allow for more flexibility in learning, and students develop social, emotional, and verbal skills at a higher rate as they learn with a variety of peers. Student self-efficacy and self-concept are improved in a multi-age classroom because they become more caring and supportive as they progress, eventually developing into role models and mentors for younger students.

Preschool—Ages 3 to 4 ½ years

Younger Kids—Pre-Kindergarten, Kindergarten, and First Grade

Middle Kids—Second and Third Grades

Older Kids—Fourth and Fifth Grades

Focus on the Whole Child

Rivendell promotes growth physically, emotionally, and intellectually. Teachers and staff understand that there is more to the learning process than memorizing facts and mastering skills. Learning can be an emotional experience for a child. Students need to have opportunities to explore interests, pursue passions, and have the social and emotional support that will help them develop into life-long learners. We believe that students should be challenged at their appropriate level so that they develop healthy learning habits that carry on with them into adulthood. Students should be energized by challenges and enjoy learning new things. At Rivendell, students have music, art, physical education, science, Spanish (Preschool – Older Kids), and technology (Younger Kids – Older Kids).

Assessment of Child Progress and Learning

At Rivendell, we believe that teaching the whole child cannot be achieved by the use of data and measurement alone. Academic and social goals are set by everyone involved: teachers, parents, and by the child as they get older. Part of our ongoing assessment is our commitment to mastery learning. Although not based on grades, mastery learning (that is, working on a task, worksheet, or project until there are no errors) demonstrates that the individual child understands and comprehends the information and/or skill. Mastery is valid because it can be verified daily by the child, teacher, and parent. Benchmarks at each grade level allow teachers to determine the appropriate pace and realistic goals.

At Rivendell, written assessments replace traditional report cards. We never teach any type of test and we are proud of that fact. We communicate the results of student performance and school effectiveness at semester conferences, through end-of-year reports, and weekly newsletters.

Rivendell measures student achievement using the Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) test.

Elementary School Curriculum Overview

At Rivendell School, we offer a unique elementary curriculum that includes math, literacy, writing, interdisciplinary topic studies (which serve as units for science and social studies), and specials (music, art, physical education, science, Spanish, and technology).

Our interdisciplinary topic studies for the 2024-25 school year include:

Community Connections
Ancient Greece and Rome
The Democratic Process
Systems of the Body
Europe
Colonial America/American Revolution
Plants
Dinosaurs/Birds

For more information see **School-wide Interdisciplinary Topics and Concept-based Learning**.

For age-group-specific information on the curriculum please visit our website (<http://www.rivendell-school.org/academics>) or ask your child's teacher.

Academic Preschool Curriculum Overview

Our preschool program supports the social-emotional growth of every child, while providing an introduction to early academics. Preschoolers need to have opportunities to explore interests, pursue passions, and have the social and emotional support that will help them develop into life-long learners. We understand that there is more to the learning process than memorizing facts and mastering skills. Because we want to foster a love for learning while creating a bridge between home and school, we meet the child right where they are.

Our goal is to provide an individual academic program for children to become competent, independent, and enthusiastic learners. While recognizing the importance of social and emotional skills, and that they are integral to the academic success of our children.

Preschoolers are exposed to a wide variety of learning opportunities with:

- Daily play activities
- Learning & play centers on
 - Dramatic & Creative Play
 - Blocks & Construction
 - Mathematics & Science

- Literacy & Writing
- Individualized academic work sessions with literacy & math skills
- Small group instruction with:
 - scissor cutting skills
 - handwriting
 - social & emotional skills
- Community-style eating arrangements
- Outdoor play & learning
- Classes in science, music, art, P.E., and Spanish
- School-wide special events (Book Partners, Group Sing, thematic day, etc.)

Rivendell follows *Colorado Early Learning & Development Guidelines*

- Approaches to Learning: initiative & curiosity, creativity
- Social & Emotional Development: relationships with adults & peers, sense of identity & belonging, emotional functioning, emotional & behavioral self-regulation, cognitive self-regulation
- Language Development & Communication: attending & understanding, communicating & speaking, vocabulary
- Literacy Knowledge & Skills: print & alphabet knowledge, phonological awareness, comprehension & text structure, writing
- Mathematics Knowledge & Skills: number concepts & quantities, operations & algebraic thinking, measurement & data, geometry & spatial sense
- Logic & Reasoning: reasoning & problem-solving, symbolic representation
- Science Knowledge & Skills: scientific inquiry, reasoning & problem solving, life science
- Social Studies Knowledge & Skills: history & events, geography, economics, civics
- Creative Arts & Expression: dance, drama theater & arts, music, visual arts
- Physical Health & Development: health, safety & nutrition, gross motor skills, fine motor skills

Preschoolers also participate in Rivendell's school-wide science and social studies units. (For more information see School-wide Interdisciplinary Topics and Concept-based Learning.)

Parent/teacher conferences are a great way for you to get the details about your child's academic and social/emotional growth and progress. These conferences are 30 minutes long and are scheduled in the fall and in the winter. These can be held in person or virtually. At the end of the school year, you will be sent home a "Where I Am" progress report.

Preschool Guidelines and Suggestions

Preschool FAQs & Suggestions

Attendance

Please remember that the Colorado Department of Human Services requires you to sign in

and sign out every day your child attends class. Children can only be signed in and signed out by an authorized person as documented in the child's permanent file. The day runs from 8:00 AM (8 - 8:30 drop-off) - 3:00 PM (3 - 3:15 pick-up), which is also slightly different from the rest of the school.

Please communicate with your preschooler's classroom teachers if they will be missing a day(s) of school for vacations, appointments, or sicknesses.

We ask that you do a health care screening BEFORE driving to school. If your child is feeling ill in the morning before school starts, please keep them home. Even sending them to preschool with a dose of ibuprofen is not permitted, as symptoms appear mid-day, and that can cause an outbreak of sickness in the classroom. For more specifics on how sick is too sick, please refer to the *Colorado Department of Health and Environment guidelines* ([link here](#)).

Drop-Off & Morning Care

Please park, and walk with your preschooler inside the building, as they need help with carrying items, and grown-ups need to sign preschoolers in each morning. We ask that you help facilitate this routine along side your preschooler for an easier transition into the classroom:

- Hang up their backpack, lunchbox, and jacket on their hook outside of the classroom
- Use the restroom, if needed
- Find their cubby, put their rest items away
- Wash hands in the classroom
- Table work check-in or find something to play with
- Say goodbye!

If you need to bring your child to school before 8:00 AM, you must sign-in your child to morning care located in the commons.

Our free play time in the morning after drop off (8:00 AM) is super important to your preschooler's continuing development with socialization and working together with their peers. We ask that you be respectful of this time and how important it is for us to bond with your child as well as for them to bond with their classmates.

Drop-off ends at 8:30 AM, and morning meetings will promptly start then. This is a whole-class learning experience, and it works the best if everyone is on time. We understand that some mornings are harder than others, and time is just not on our side. Just let us know! Send us a quick email, or call the front office to let them know you're running late.

Pick-Up & After-Care

Preschoolers are picked up in the classroom and never at curbside pick-up with the rest of the school children. Pick-up is from 3 - 3:15 PM inside the classroom. If you need to pick up your preschooler before 3 PM, please communicate with your preschooler's teachers.

If children are not picked up by 3:15 PM, then they will be signed into aftercare. Rivendell will charge your account if your preschooler is joining the aftercare program. Preschool after-care will be located in Room 11.

**Aftercare is not an extension of the school day, and should not be used as an enrichment activity.*

What to Wear to School

Preschoolers are busy and activities can get messy!! Please have your child wear play clothes every day. Paint, water, sand, clay, glue, markers, spills, etc. require full participation and clothes will get dirty.

At Rivendell we prioritize outside play! Expect your child to go outside each day for one (1) full hour, as long as the temperature is above 18°F. Our playground surface is unforgiving, and you can save your preschooler's knees and toes with sturdy footwear to help avoid falls. Feel free to leave extra shoes at school.

Sunscreen

Please apply sunscreen to your child *before school* every day. If we choose to go back outside, teachers will reapply sunscreen after nap time with Rivendell (Coppertone Kids SPF 50).

Only bring an extra sunscreen (labeled with your child's name) with a signed non-medical consent form to keep at school if you **DO NOT want us to apply Rivendell provided sunscreen after nap time.*

Snow Gear

We highly recommend sending full winter/waterproof gear with your preschooler:

- Snow pants or snowsuit
- Winter jacket
- Hat & mittens/gloves
- Snow boots

Feel free to store these items at school in the hallway with a bag to hang up, or a storage cube to be placed on the floor.

**Everything left at school will need to be taken home every Friday to be washed and returned for the following week.*

What to Bring to School

- smiles and happiness – *this goes a long way!*
- a labeled lunch & water bottle
- nap & rest items (on the first day of the week)

- **KEEP AT HOME:** Toys, and other special objects. We have plenty of toys at school to share, and we rotate them out every two weeks. We worry that special items will get lost or broken so please keep them at home, or in the car for after school.

Extra Clothing

Please send a complete change of clothing and underwear with your child's *NAME* on it to be kept in the preschool bathroom in a 1 gallon ziplock bag. These items include a shirt, pants/shorts, underwear, and socks. *Your child must be fully potty trained before they start school.* but we do understand that occasionally accidents can happen. We will send home untouched clothes quarterly to be replaced for the season changes. Make sure that clothes are the right size, as preschoolers tend to grow at a rapid pace.

Nap & Rest Time Items

Your preschooler will have an assigned nap cubby with a provided storage cube to house their nap time items. Please provide:

- a *fitted crib sheet* and a small blanket (2 ft x 4 ft)
- a small, soft and quiet comfort stuffie – *it should not be a distraction*
- OPTIONAL: pillows – must be small enough to fit inside of their nap storage cube, or they will be asked to remain at home.
- OPTIONAL: slippers – in accordance with the fire department, footwear must be worn at all times, otherwise preschoolers will nap with their shoes on.

**All nap items must be taken home every weekend to be laundered and returned.*

Hand Lotion & Chapstick – OPTIONAL

We wash our hands a lot throughout our day, and our climate is very dry. Chapped hands and lips happen, and we would like to keep your child as comfortable as possible during the school day. We may ask you to provide your preschooler with hand lotion or chapstick if your preschooler needs it to be applied during the day. These items will need a non-medical consent form to be signed.

*Please note that pacifiers are not allowed while at school. Pacifiers prevent children from communicating with their peers and teachers effectively. They also pose a sanitation risk with the spread of germs.

Lunch & Snacks

Our morning snack at Rivendell is provided by parents in accordance with USDA meal guidelines. A monthly sign up sheet will be out for families to sign up to be a “snack volunteer” and provide a snack for the class. You may sign up for as many, or as few times throughout the month/year as suits your family. Snacks can be provided ahead of time to be stored at school. All produce must be turned in unwashed, and uncut to school. All box items must remain unopened. Think of it as you are transporting it from

the grocery store to the school. All snacks must be prepared by the teachers in the classroom to make sure proper food handling practices are followed.

If your preschooler is staying for after-care, a snack will be provided at 3:30 PM, but feel free to pack any extra snacks for after school.

Children are to bring their own lunch from home or purchase a hot lunch ticket through the front office. We do not provide a refrigerator for cold storage for lunchboxes, so please pack it with an ice pack. Also, we cannot warm up anything for lunch for your preschooler in a microwave.

We expect your child to eat a little of everything that is packed in their lunch, but we do not monitor in what order they eat their food. We supervise and encourage eating an appropriate amount before leaving the table. Leftovers are put back in lunch boxes so that parents can see how much your child eats every day.

**Please make sure you are packing containers that your preschooler can open on their own.*

We do have allergies in our preschool and would like to do our very best to keep everyone healthy. We will have an allergy free table for these preschoolers to sit at everyday. Teachers will be checking lunches to ensure allergen foods are not placed at the allergy free table.

General Health Appraisals for Preschool

State regulations require all Preschool students enrolled at Rivendell to have a current General Health Appraisal Form completed by a healthcare provider on file by the time they are enrolled. The Colorado Department of Human Services monitors students' documents to maintain that all required paperwork is completed. General Health Appraisals expire after one year. If your child is in Preschool and the form expires, your child's pediatrician will need to complete an updated form.

Attendance:

Please remember that it is required by the Colorado Department of Human Services to sign in and sign out every day your child attends class. Children can only be signed in and signed out by an authorized person as documented in the child's permanent file. Preschoolers are dropped off and picked up in the classroom and never at curbside pick-up with the rest of the school children. Our day runs from 8:00am (8-8:30am drop-off) - 3:00pm (3-3:15 pick-up), which is slightly different from the rest of the school. If children are not picked up by 3:15 pm, then they will be signed into aftercare. Rivendell will charge your account if your preschooler is joining the aftercare program. Aftercare is not an extension of the school day, and should not be used as an enrichment activity.

DON'T FORGET to check your preschooler's mailbox every day your child is in class.

Policies & Guidelines

Biting Policy

Young children from time to time do display this behavior as a result of frustration or lack of verbal skills. If this happens, first aid will be given and the "biting child" will have their attention redirected. Parents will be contacted and an incident report will go home with both children (the child who bit and the child who was bitten) and a copy will be placed in their files. When biting occurs, Rivendell School will attend to the following policy:

- First offense: Parents will be notified and the child's attention redirected.
- Second offense: Parents will be called and the child will be removed from the classroom for that day. A conference will be scheduled to discuss future prevention.
- Third offense: Parents will be called, the child will be dismissed for the remainder of the day, the child will be suspended for the following day, and a conference will be scheduled with the parents to discuss future prevention and a behavior plan.

Suspension from preschool and termination may ultimately result if a child continues to bite, but will only be used as a last resort. A verbal and written notice will be provided to parents in this event.

Potty-Accident Policy

Children enrolled at Rivendell must be potty trained before attending. Children must be wearing underwear with very few accidents. A child having accidents daily would not be considered potty trained. Also, wearing pull-ups is not considered potty-trained and that Rivendell does not allow children to wear pull-ups in school.

At Rivendell, we understand that even potty-trained children will occasionally have toileting accidents. By definition, "accidents" are unusual incidents and should happen infrequently. In these instances, the teachers and staff will help children change their clothes while encouraging independence as much as possible.

To help identify if your child is potty-trained, you can do the following:

1. Communicate to the teacher that he/she needs to go to the bathroom before they need to go.
2. Stop what he/she is doing to go to use the bathroom.
3. Pull down his/her clothes and get them back up without assistance.
4. Wipe him/herself after using the toilet.
5. Get on and off the potty by him/herself.
6. Wash and dry hands.
7. Postpone if they must wait for someone who is in the bathroom or if they are away from the classroom or on the playground.
8. Do not require a potty chair or seat to use bathrooms at school.

Children will be reminded throughout the day to use the bathroom. We understand that all children who are fully toilet trained can have setbacks when in a new environment. Rivendell staff is aware of this and will assist the children when necessary. Parents will be notified if a child has a toilet accident. We have a four week grace period from the start of the school year to allow your child to demonstrate that they are potty trained. However, if the situation is not manageable within the classroom environment, we will discuss the issue with the parents and reserve the right to suspend the attendance of the child at such time. If your child is not completely potty trained as described above, the following options are available:

1. You may withdraw your child from the program and place their name at the top of our waitlist. Registration fee, first tuition payment, and supply fees are all nonrefundable; However, if your child re-enrolls at a later date for the same school year, you will not need to pay these fees again. If enrollment is postponed to the following year, then you will be required to pay the new registration fee, initial tuition, and supply fee for that year.
2. You may pay full tuition to hold your spot until potty training has been completed.

A child will not be considered potty trained and ready for our program if the child continues to consistently have toileting accidents after the first four weeks of school.

After the first four weeks of school, the following policies will be in place for children who have accidents:

1. If one or two accidents (excluding nap time) occur in one school week, the parent will be notified with the understanding that the issue needs to be addressed and corrected.
2. If three or more accidents (excluding nap time) occur in one school week, the parent will be notified with the understanding that if the issue isn't corrected by the end of the second school week, the child will have to stay home the following school week, or longer until he/she is completely potty-trained.

**Tuition will not be prorated during this time. Parents should contact the Head of School to facilitate the child's return to school.*

3. Once the child returns from the week off for potty practice, if they have three accidents (excluding nap time) in one school week, they will need to stay home for the remainder of the school week and the following school week, or longer until he/she is completely potty-trained.

**Tuition will not be prorated during this time. Parents should contact the Head of School to facilitate the child's return to school.*

Nap & Rest Time

Nap & rest time occurs from 12:30-1:30 daily. Skipping, or opting out of nap time is not permitted for your preschooler as it is a state requirement to provide preschoolers with a rest time for one (1) hour. If your preschooler is not asleep after thirty (30) minutes, they will be provided with a developmentally appropriate alternative.

General School Policies, Practices, and Information

Admissions and Enrollment

Families who are interested in learning more about Rivendell School are invited to contact our Admissions Specialist, Madeline Cook, to submit an application and to schedule a tour. A tour provides the opportunity to meet with our Head of School, Holly Warren, to learn about Rivendell's philosophy, to ask questions, and to become acquainted with our facility.

After the tour, the student's application will be carefully considered, and if Rivendell appears to be a good fit for the student and their family, a formal invitation to enroll will be extended. As part of the enrollment process, families must turn in an enrollment packet, a signed financial agreement, and a non-refundable registration fee.

Any questions regarding enrollment and the admissions process should be directed to the front office.

Preschool Schedule Change and Enrollment Policy

When families enroll in Rivendell's Preschool, they select a 5-day or 4-day schedule. Those spots are permanent for the remainder of the school year, unless two families come to an agreement to switch schedule positions, or, if a spot becomes available and a family chooses to switch their schedule. If either of the previous situations occur, the family switching their schedule must submit a formal written agreement detailing their decision to switch schedules. Once there is a formal written notice, the schedule will be changed and they cannot retract their decision.

Assessments, Conferences, and Report Cards

Assessment is ongoing at Rivendell School. We use a variety of methods to evaluate each student's knowledge, skills, and abilities. Teachers assess students daily throughout class activities, one-on-one conferences, and interactions. Each child's progress is monitored and recorded and utilized in the process of individualizing their learning.

Our school administers the Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) test twice a year to all third, fourth, and fifth grade students. MAP creates a personalized assessment experience by adapting to each student's learning level—precisely measuring each student's progress and growth. By combining this personalized information with the MAP Learning Continuum, teachers will be able to create customized learning goals and focused individualized learning programs

for each student. Another benefit of the MAP assessment is that teachers receive the results within 24 hours versus several weeks later during the summer.

What does this look like for my child?

Beginning mid-September, students in grades 2nd through 5th will take three computer-based assessments in Language Arts, Math, and Reading. These assessments are not timed; however, most students require about one hour to complete each assessment. During the assessment, MAP will adapt to each child's learning level by asking questions of varying difficulty. As the students answer questions correctly, more difficult material is presented to determine their maximum level of understanding for that concept and subject. It is important to know that students will see questions that they do not know how to answer. This is critical to determining their current ceiling. However, because this assessment is at each child's specific learning level, children rarely experience the frustrations of other tests. In the spring the students will again take the three assessments. This second administration will allow us to determine their progress and growth. By comparing their growth to that of a national norm population of more than 35 million students across the country, we will be able to determine the effectiveness of each child's individualized program and make appropriate changes for the next learning cycle. As we continue to gather this data long-term our ability to fine-tune each student's learning increases.

What will I receive as a parent?

During the fall conferences, your child's teacher will have information from the fall assessment. This will include not only your child's results from the assessment but also goal areas they will be working on during the year. During second-semester conferences, you will receive a report showing your child's growth along with goals for the second semester.

We are excited to have this outstanding tool to help us maximize student learning at Rivendell. If you would like further information about the MAP assessment please visit NWEA's website at <https://www.nwea.org/assessments/map/>, or talk with your child's teacher.

Parent conferences are held in October and January. Report cards are issued in May.

Attendance and Absences

Our regular school hours are 8:30 AM to 3:20 PM (Younger Kids – Older Kids) and 3:00 PM (Preschool), Monday through Friday. Classrooms begin their academic studies at 8:30 AM, so please make every effort to have your child here on time. If you are dropping them off, please arrive in time to help them get settled and exit the classroom by 8:30 AM.

Early Arrival:

If your child arrives at school before 8:00 AM, we request that you walk them to the Extended Care room. The location of Extended Care rooms for each day are posted in the front office, and they may change weekly. A fee for Extended Care will be charged. (For more information see **Extended Care.**)

Late Arrival:

If your child is going to arrive after 8:30 AM, please let the front office know. When your child arrives late, please sign them in at the front office and an office staff member will walk them to their classroom.

Absence:

Continuity in the learning process and social development and adaptation is seriously disrupted by excessive absences. If your child will be absent due to illness, vacation, etc., please inform their teacher via email. If the absence is to be extended, please notify administration and provide a doctor's note. If advance notice is given for an extended absence, teachers will put together homework packets.

Birthday Invitations and Treats

Birthday party invitations may not be distributed at school. Please see the Rivendell Directory for emails and addresses. Copies of the Rivendell Directory are available in the front office starting in September.

If your child wishes to bring treats to school to celebrate his/her birthday or a special event, please let the teachers know. They will tell you how many treats are needed and if there are any food allergies to consider. As per the Health Department's recommendation, we require that all treats be pre-packaged or prepared by a licensed food preparer. **Please do not bring in any treats made at home or which contain any nuts, peanuts, peanut butter or nut by products. In an effort to limit sugar intake, please consider bringing a healthy option or smaller sized treat.**

Bullying

At Rivendell School, we have a strict anti-bullying policy. We define bullying to be any pattern of behavior that is intended to coerce, intimidate, or cause physical, mental, or emotional harm to any student. Bullying can take the form of written, oral, or electronic expression, as well as physical acts or gestures. Bullying includes, but is not limited to, expressions, acts, or gestures directed toward a student on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, national origin, disability, genetic information, sexual orientation, or academic performance. While any particular negative interaction between students might not necessarily be defined as bullying, we reserve the right to determine whether individual acts, gestures, or expressions should be responded to as cases of bullying and Rivendell shall at its sole and absolute discretion determine if it believes such conduct constitutes bullying.

The faculty, staff, and board at Rivendell School recognize the negative impact that bullying has on student health, welfare, and safety, as well as on the learning environment of the school. Bullying is prohibited at Rivendell School and at all school-sanctioned events and activities, whether the school-sanctioned events and activities occur on or off school grounds. All Rivendell School employees and volunteers have the responsibility of reporting potential cases of bullying to the Head of School. The Head of School reserves the right to determine the appropriate response to instances of bullying in order to maintain a learning environment free from bullying. Responses may include, but need not be limited to, student suspension, student expulsion, school-wide assemblies for students, or training for employees designed to recognize and discourage bullying in all its forms.

Cell Phones

Students will be permitted to use a school telephone for important or emergency calls approved by their teacher and the office. Cell phone use for students within the building is prohibited. Students may have cellphones at school if they are kept out of sight at all times, knowing that we cannot be responsible for loss or damage(See **Valuables at School**). Students are welcome to use their cell phones before or after school hours and off school grounds, except when on a Rivendell-sponsored field trip. If students need to make a phone call on school grounds they should use a school phone. This includes students in Extended Care (before and after school hours).

Child Abuse Reporting Compliance

Rivendell School is compliant with the following directive from the Colorado Department of Human Services, Division of Child Care:

Any caregiver or staff member in a child care facility who has reasonable cause to know or suspect that a child has been subjected to abuse or neglect or who has observed the child being subjected to circumstances or conditions that would reasonably result in abuse or neglect must immediately report or cause a report to be made of such fact to the county department of social services or local law enforcement agency. Any suspected child abuse or child neglect must be reported to the Colorado Department of Human Services, Division of Child Care.

DIVISION OF CHILD CARE
COLORADO DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
1575 Sherman Street
Denver, Colorado 80203-1714
303-866-5958

Child Custody and Parenting Time Disputes

Rivendell will remain neutral in all custody and/or parenting time disputes. Unless there is a protective order, restraining order, or order restricting parenting time, Rivendell cannot deny a parent or guardian access to his or her child. A guardian is defined under Colorado law as an individual who is at least twenty-one years of age and who has qualified as a guardian of a child pursuant to appointment by a parent or a court.

Rivendell will not interject itself into the middle of custody and/or parenting time disputes and requires that all parents and/or guardians resolve their differences through legal channels. Additionally, because Rivendell's ultimate goal is the safety of its students, Rivendell cannot be used as a location for visitation, supervised or otherwise.

If a parent or guardian names Rivendell as the location for parenting time exchanges, said parent or guardian must notify Rivendell's principal, or a supervisor, immediately. Rivendell expressly reserves the right to terminate its place as the exchange location, if Rivendell, in Rivendell's sole discretion, determines that using Rivendell as an exchange location is not working.

Communication

At Rivendell, we are proud of our proactive communication. Being a small school with a close-knit community, we rely on a variety of methods to make sure parents stay informed about all the fun events that happen throughout the year. You can expect the following forms of communication from our school.

- **Weekly School-wide Newsletter.** This communication will give you information about upcoming events. Please take time to browse through this information each Sunday evening so that you are informed about everything happening at our school.
- **Weekly Teacher Emails.** Each week our dedicated teachers take time to give parents a thorough preview of the coming week. This email includes academic information, event information, and oftentimes will give you a good picture of what is happening in the classroom.
- **Parent/Teacher Conferences.** Parent/teacher conferences are a great way for you to get the details about your child's academic and social/emotional growth and progress. These conferences are 30 minutes and are scheduled in the Fall and at the beginning of the second semester (see the calendar for dates). You'll learn how to sign up for these conferences by reading the school newsletter and teacher weekly emails.

- **Back-to-School Night.** Hear first-hand from your child's teachers about the academic plan for the school year. Teachers share curriculum plans and outline, in parent-friendly terms, how they individualize for students throughout the year.
- **New Family Orientation.** This event will help new parents learn further information about the Rivendell philosophy and why and how we do what we do. You'll hear from teachers, the Head of School, and a few parents about what you need to know to help your child have a successful year at Rivendell. All new families are required to attend. Returning parents are also welcome to attend.
- **Front-entry Sign.** Check the front entry sign each morning for important information for the day or week.
- **Drop-off and Pick-up.** Parents are encouraged to walk their children in each morning, and this can be a great time to check in with your child's teacher or for them to check in with you.
- **Emails and Phone Calls.** Rivendell teachers work very hard to respond to all parent emails and phone calls. Please understand that teachers might need 24 hours to respond due to their teaching responsibilities.
- **Rivendell Website.** The Rivendell Website (www.rivendell-school.org) is a great source of information for families. We update it regularly, and you can find the school calendar, important forms, schedules, and class notes all posted there. Visit it frequently and let us know if you have suggestions on how to make it even better.
- **Social Media.** Rivendell updates frequently on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. Follow us on Twitter, Instagram, and like our Facebook page, and share with your friends. These forms of communication are fun ways to share all the great things happening at Rivendell with your friends and family.

Rivendell staff and faculty want to be available for you. The best way to arrange a meeting with a teacher or any other staff member is by sending an email or by verbal request. Long talks before or after school are not as productive as they could be with time to think and plan for a conversation. We know that hearing from parents helps us better understand your children, so please always feel welcome to let us know if you have information or perspective to share.

Conduct Policy

This policy is sent home at the start of each school year or as a student enrolls. There is no need to sign the form in this handbook, but please use this as a reference for the future. Teachers will be reviewing with students on the first day of school.

All Rivendell staff members are committed to the goal of helping each child develop self-control and self-discipline leading to maturity and responsible citizenship. To achieve this goal, it is necessary that all members of our school community (students, parents, and teachers) understand and agree upon guidelines and expectations. The school and home need to form a

strong partnership in this effort by working together to create an environment conducive to positive student development.

Standards

To ensure that all students receive equal educational opportunities, students are expected to:

- Cooperate with the directions of staff members and comply with the rules of the classroom and school.
- Respect school and private property.
- Refrain from fighting and other physical acts which may cause injury to people or property.
- Refrain from threats or verbal assaults including profanity, name-calling, racial or ethnic slurs, obscene gestures, or acts of intimidation.

To paraphrase for our younger students:

- We keep ourselves safe.
- We keep each other safe.
- We keep our things safe.

Process

The following steps will be implemented if the above expectations are breached:

1. Teacher and student attempt resolution of the problem. If not resolved, then
2. Teacher contacts parent to share information and seek resolution. If not resolved, then
3. Teacher, parent, and student (if appropriate) meet with the Head of School to develop a plan.
4. Follow-up meeting takes place to assure the plan has been effective. If the problem still persists, then
5. Student may be suspended or expelled from school.

Note: In extreme cases, steps 1, 2, 3 and 4 may be skipped at the discretion of the Head of School.

Directory

At the beginning of each school year, a directory will be printed and available to Rivendell families via the front office. Digital copies will be available, as well. The directory includes current staff and student information. It also contains class lists. Parents are welcome to withhold information from the directory. The opportunity to let us know if you would/would not like your information in the directory is in the form of written consent on your enrollment form.

The directory is published for the convenience of Rivendell families. Please notify the office of any corrections or changes. Please do not use the information for commercial, political, religious or other public purposes.

Discipline and Student Conduct

Discipline:

Rivendell staff honor the Cline/Fay Institute philosophy of discipline, Love and Logic. Love and Logic seeks to maintain the child's dignity and self-worth as well as develop their problem-solving skills. The guidelines are detailed in Parenting with Love and Logic by Foster Cline, M.D. and Jim Fay, copyright 1990. Staff also follow the Principles of Discipline with Dignity as outlined below.

Four Basic Principles of Discipline with Dignity

The student's self-concept is always prime consideration.

Teachers who learn to use Discipline with Dignity discover that self-concept can be enhanced even during situations in which students are being disciplined or required to meet firm expectations. The study of Discipline with Dignity teaches us to be aware of the unstated and implied messages that either enhance or reduce self-concept.

The study of Discipline with Dignity and its relationship to self-concept provides reassurance that children who have firm limits and learn to be responsible have higher self-concepts and achieve at a higher academic level than others.

The child is always left with a feeling that he/she has some control.

The study of Discipline with Dignity helps teachers learn that control is gained through investing some control in the other person. However, this control is offered on the adult's terms.

Teachers who study Discipline with Dignity learn to replace demands with alternatives. Instead of saying, "You're not going out without your coat!" they tend to say, "Are you going to wear your coat or carry it?"

An equal balance of consequences and empathy replaces punishment whenever possible.

Life's most important lessons are learned when we experience the natural consequences of our decisions. However, students who face consequences at the hands of an angry, threatening adult tend to concentrate on the adult's emotions at the expense of thinking about their own inappropriate actions or poor decisions.

The study of Discipline with Dignity teaches that the best lessons are learned when the consequence is experienced with an equal balance of understanding and empathy on the part of the adult.

The student is required to do more thinking than the adult.

Students who experience Discipline with Dignity find that they are required to make many decisions and to live with the consequences of those decisions. They also find that they are expected to own and solve their own problems with teacher guidance.

Teachers who develop the techniques of Discipline with Dignity discover that it is far easier to maintain firm limits and expectations through the use of **thinking words** rather than through the use of **fighting words**.

Great teachers spend most of their time asking questions. Poor teachers spend most of their time giving orders. Great teachers demand responsible behaviors. Poor teachers demand blind obedience.

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Golden, CO 80401
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Dress Code

Do not wear clothing which consists of advertising/logos for tobacco, liquor, drugs or displays material of a sexual or violent nature. Clothing that prohibits normal school activity or does not cover the body appropriately for a school setting are not to be worn to school.

Clogs, mules, and flip-flops are not the best choice for footwear. We find that children have difficulty safely wearing these styles of shoes considering our playground surface and our physical education classes are active.

Children must dress for the weather. Students go outside on most days and being appropriately attired allows for an enjoyable outdoor time. Staying inside is not an option. Keep in mind the "unpredictability" of Colorado weather and anticipate weather changes.

Winter weather necessitates boots, warm outerwear (coat/snow pants), gloves or mittens, and hats. Street shoes or slippers must be brought for indoor use on wet or snowy days. We strongly suggest keeping an extra pair of socks in your child's backpack.

On hot days a hat may be useful, as well as sunscreen to apply before outside time. A water bottle is also encouraged. All items must be labeled with the student's name.

Drugs, Tobacco and Alcohol

Drug/alcohol policy for Rivendell School:

For purposes of clarifying this policy, the substances at issue include: all beverages containing alcohol, tobacco products, marijuana, and "harder" drugs including, but not limited to heroin, methamphetamines, cocaine, and any other illegal or illicit substances.

Parents play the most critical role in student substance use issues. Any efforts to control, mitigate, and prohibit drug use is best done when the parents and school are working in harmony and agreement on these matters.

Students will not bring prohibited substances to any activity of Rivendell School. This includes regular classrooms, field trips, school events, and any other activity sponsored by the school. Students will not make such substances available to other students at any such event or school-hosted outing or gathering. Students will not come to any school activity under the influence of any of the prohibited substances. There will be no smoking on school grounds or in school buildings.

Emergency Notifications and Procedures

There is an updated Emergency Response Plan in every classroom. Rivendell families will be notified via email, text message, and website when there is a whole-school emergency. For emergencies involving individual students or families, we will first try to call your emergency contacts. Emails will be sent if we cannot get in touch with the family. In case of a medical emergency, we will call 9-1-1 first.

Rivendell's Crisis Response Team has developed plans for a variety of emergency situations. In addition to any natural emergencies, we have established a "lockdown" system and have supplies stored in case of an extended emergency. Rivendell staff and children practice fire drills and are taught what to do in case of emergencies. Every staff member is certified in the use of CPR and First Aid. Please find the Standard Response Protocol for parents and guardians [here](#). If this is a hard copy, please find the SRP at the end of the handbook.

In case of an emergency, an updated message will be posted on our school's website, www.rivendell-school.org. Parents should check there for detailed information and instructions.

Evacuation: In the event of a school or classroom evacuation, children will be escorted to EPIC located at 1801 Riverside Avenue Fort Collins, CO 80525. We will evacuate children with disabilities based upon their needs. Attendance will be taken and parents will be notified of the situation. Teachers will bring emergency contact phone numbers for each child to our destination, therefore it is important that parents keep emergency forms updated at all times. At some point, if necessary, and if cellular services are available, a message will be left on the parent's emergency phone number or an email will be sent to explain the situation. Keeping our students safe and calm is our first priority.

Tornadoes: In case of a tornado warning, children will be brought inside the school from the playground and will be taken by their teachers to an inner, windowless "Safety Zone." Teachers will provide books and games for the children to relieve the children's anxiety, and will keep them occupied until the tornado warning is lifted.

Fire/Toxic Spills: In case of a fire, Rivendell staff and students will evacuate the school. Students will be led out of the building to a designated "safety zone." Once the evacuation is completed, staff will confirm that all children are present and accounted for. Children will remain in the "safety zone" until notification is given by a fire/police official that it is safe to return to the building.

Lost Children: In the unlikely event that a child should become lost, Rivendell staff members will conduct a sweep of the area. If the child is not located within ten minutes, the Fort Collins police will be notified. Parents will be notified immediately.

Enrichment Camps

Summer Enrichment Camps

Each summer, Rivendell offers a wide array of enrichment classes for children ages three to 13. Camps include such topics as biking, pottery, photography, history, writing, hiking and nature, rainforests, etc. See our website (www.rivendell-school.org) for more information.

Extended Care

The Rivendell Extended Care Program (before- and after-school daycare) is offered as a service to all enrolled students. It is available on an “as needed” basis. Children who have not been picked up by 3:30 PM are automatically taken to after-school daycare. If school is not in session, daycare is closed as well.

- A snack of crackers and water is provided to all students. Students may bring their own snack to eat.
- Activities may include free and organized playtime, with activities such as simple crafts, study time, silent reading, storytelling, games, toys and outside time.
- Preschool and Younger Kids – Older Kids will start in separate rooms during after-school care. The whole group will join together after approximately 45 minutes.
- After-school care allows for time outside as often as weather permits.
- On occasion, a child-appropriate video will be shown, especially if there is inclement weather.
- At no time are children taken off Rivendell property except by legal authorities.
- Students are not allowed to hang out in the library or commons areas before or after school. All students at Rivendell before or after school will be part of the Extended Care Program.
- Students are not allowed to use cell phones, iPads, or other electronic devices while in Extended Care. In the case of an urgent situation or emergency, Extended Care staff will allow students to use a Rivendell phone line to contact their parents.
- The Rivendell Extended Care Program is only for students who are enrolled at Rivendell for the *current* school year.

Charges for Extended Care:

- The cost for extended care is \$10.00 per child, per hour.
- Arriving anytime between 7:00 AM – 8:00 AM is \$10.00. Afternoon (3:30 PM – 6:00 PM) is charged in half-hour increments.
- The total is tallied at the end of the month and added to your tuition statement for the next month.

- There are no charges if your child is brought to school after 8:00 AM or picked up before 3:15 PM for Preschoolers, or before 3:30 PM for Younger Kids – Older Kids.

After-school pick-up after 6:00 PM:

- Staff are scheduled until 6:00 PM each day. After 6:00 PM, families will be charged \$25 in addition to the hourly charge.
- If dinner is provided for the student after 6:00 PM, the family will be charged the cost of the dinner.
- Staff will call parents that have not arrived by 6:00 PM. If the staff member cannot get in touch with parents or the emergency contact, Rivendell is required to contact the police.

Field Trips

Field trips are an exciting part of school, and each age group will go on at least one field trip a year. Before each field trip, a permission slip will be sent home. Please review and sign it, as well as make sure to include appropriate emergency contact information. We require that all students wear their purple Rivendell T-shirts on field trips. (If your child does not have a purple t-shirt, please let the front office know.) The majority of field trip costs are covered by fundraising, but occasionally parents may be asked to contribute a *small* amount for an entrance fee or help with a charter bus. Sometimes we have parent volunteers drive students to different activities in town. In these instances, this information will be on the permission form.

Financial Policies

Please refer to the Financial Agreement that each family signs at the time of enrollment.

Late Payments

- Tuition is due by the 1st of each month.
- A late fee of \$50 will be added on the 10th of the month.
- If tuition is not paid by the 15th, the Rivendell Business Manager will contact the family to establish a payment plan.

Automated Clearing House (ACH) Payments

The total account balance, due as of the first of each month, will be processed through ACH payments by Rivendell on the 1st of each month. Total account balances will include tuition, extended care charges, semester supply fees (payable on August 1st and January 1st), lunch ticket purchases, SCRIP cards, enrichment camps (during the school year) and all other incidental expenses. Donations may also be made via ACH. Should an ACH payment be returned for any reason, the amount returned is due immediately, in addition to a \$25 processing fee.

Returned Check Charge

Checks returned indicating Non-Sufficient Funds (NSF) will result in the family being charged \$25. Rivendell School reserves the right to require cash, money orders, or other forms of payment for tuition if a check is returned.

Extended Absences

If a student will have an extended absence, please meet with the Head of School to determine if their place can be held.

Terms for Waiver of Tuition

In the event Rivendell decides it is in the best interest of the educational environment to dismiss the Student, the family remains jointly and severally liable for the tuition payment due for the month of dismissal; all future monthly tuition installments are dismissed.

Right of Rescission

Families who enroll have a period of three (3) calendar days from the date on which this Financial Agreement is executed (the "Rescission Period") to terminate the Financial Agreement without further obligation or penalty. The Rescission Period shall end at 12:00 a.m. on the fourth (4th) day after execution of this Financial Agreement. Notice of termination pursuant to this limited Right of Rescission must be in writing, signed by me/us, and delivered to the Rivendell Office or by email delivered to office@rivendell-school.org (email notification must be sent with receipt acknowledgment required.) If the Rescission Period includes any weekend or state holiday, the Rescission Period shall be extended to the end of the next business day.

Withdrawal

If the Student withdraws for any other reason, the family remains jointly and severally liable for the tuition payments due for the remainder of the semester of withdrawal, regardless of whether such withdrawal occurs during the first or second semester. The family understands and agrees that upon enrollment and execution of the Financial Agreement for your Student(s) and payment of the Registration Fee, the family is responsible to pay the entire semester's tuition regardless of whether the Student actually attends Rivendell.

Financial Hardship Policy

The intent of this policy is to provide a payment plan structure for families who are experiencing financial hardship. Rivendell will identify any family whose tuition payment is delinquent as of the 15th of the month. The family will be contacted by the business manager to discuss payment options. Families may come forward on their own to discuss events that are likely to lead to late payments or student withdrawal. The goal will be to support the family and Rivendell by agreeing to a structured arrangement that spreads the past due and upcoming tuition payments across more periods to ease the financial burden.

The following guidelines apply:

- If a family fails to communicate with the business manager before the end of the first month that tuition isn't paid, the student may not be allowed to continue enrollment.
- Payment plans only apply to tuition and cannot be used to pay extended care or any other fees.
- Under this policy, tuition cannot be waived.
- No interest will be charged.
- If a payment plan check is returned for non-payment, all future payments will be required to be paid by cashier's check or direct bank transfer.
- Extended care is only available if the payment plan is current and all non-tuition charges have been paid in full by the 7th of the month.

Food and Food Allergies

Lunch at Rivendell may be brought from home or bought. (See **Lunch Program**.) We do not have the capability to refrigerate lunches for students, so they should be brought in an insulated lunch bag with an ice pack. Students are encouraged to bring a healthy snack (such as fruit, nuts, crackers or cheese) for a mid-morning snack to eat at recess. Treats such as candy or cookies are not considered snack foods.

Rivendell is not a "peanut free zone." Along with alerting us to food allergies on your student's health form, please alert your child's teacher. We will make seating accommodations for children with peanut allergies. As a school we do not offer foods that have peanuts or peanut byproducts. We also request that any treats brought to the school for birthdays or other celebrations be peanut (nut) free.

Homework

Homework is the responsibility of the student and a component of his/her academic activity. Each teacher determines the amount and scope of homework that is appropriate for their classroom, but homework will not be assigned on a nightly basis until students reach the Middle Kid age group. Younger Kids and preschoolers may have a few special homework assignments during the school year, but there will be plenty of notice before the assignment is due. We encourage the families of all our students to spend time every night reading with your children.

Illness Policy

Keeping our students healthy is a top priority at Rivendell School. If your child is showing signs of illness, please plan to keep them home. Children should remain home if any of the following conditions are present:

- Fever

- Runny nose with yellow or green mucus
- Constant cough
- Earache, sore throat
- Nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, stomach pain
- Open skin lesions
- Undiagnosed rashes
- Excessive drowsiness or lethargy, dizziness
- Painful or frequent urination
- Mattery discharge from eyes

Should your child become ill while at Rivendell, he/she will be made comfortable in the office (to isolate from others and where an adult will be within hearing). We will take a temperature reading and allow for some rest time. Parents or emergency contacts will be contacted if improvement is not seen in 15-20 minutes, or sooner if the fever is high or the child is vomiting. For the safety of your child and other children we request that you pick up your child as soon as possible.

If your child requires medicine to be administered to them during the school day, please talk to the front office staff and have your child's pediatrician fill out a **Medical Authorization Form**. There are very specific procedures for medications which must be followed.

We would like to remind families to help reinforce at home how important it is for students to wash their hands frequently throughout the day. Bathroom breaks and lunchtime are perfect opportunities for washing hands.

Immunization Policy

Colorado law (Board of Health rule 6 CCR 1009-2) requires all students attending Colorado schools and licensed child care facilities to be vaccinated against certain diseases, unless an exemption is on file. The Parent Letter for child cares, preschools and Head Start Programs has been posted on CDPHE's Immunization Branch website at:

<https://cdphe.colorado.gov/child-care-resources>

Medical and Nonmedical Exemptions

There are changes to the vaccine exemptions which will be implemented for the 2021-2022 school year. You can access the vaccine exemption page at <https://cdphe.colorado.gov/vaccine-exemptions>

- The 2024-25 exemption guidance is also posted and it is important that you review the information regarding the Certificate of Medical Exemption as well as the Certificate of Nonmedical Exemption. The nonmedical exemption will require an immunizing health care provider signature at each submission.
- Please review the "Online Immunization Education Module" as this will be an exemption option in lieu of submission of a nonmedical exemption. After reviewing the 20 minute video, the exempting parent will be able to download a certificate of completion to submit to the school.

Inclement Weather and Cancellations

Rivendell kids love to be outside, and we love to be outside with them! Please plan on your child playing outside every day unless there is an extreme weather condition. We follow Colorado human services guidelines to determine the safety of outdoor play.

Children should wear weather-appropriate clothing daily and should bring labeled gear for outdoor play during the winter (hats, boots, gloves, snow pants, and a warm coat). Ideally, children should be able to put their winter gear on independently. They should also bring some extra clothing (socks, pants) for wet, cold Colorado days.

In the case of a snowstorm or other extreme weather condition that makes travel to school unsafe, Rivendell generally follows the same cancellations as Poudre School District but there may be some exceptions. We notify parents through our website as well as a school-wide email if there is a cancellation. If there is a notification that Poudre schools are closed (via television or radio) Rivendell will close, too. If Poudre School District makes the decision to have a "late-start," Rivendell will also have a delayed start.

Injuries and Accidents at School

On-site medical administration is limited to washing the affected area with water, covering the area with an adhesive bandage (no ointments can be applied), or giving the child a cold pack for minor bumps. We cannot give any pain medication or fever reducers.

If a child receives an injury beyond minor scrapes and bumps, attempts will be made to contact a parent and explain the injury and the cause. If no parent contact is made, a phone message or note to the parent will be generated. If an injury or accident results in medical treatment by a physician or other health professional and/or hospitalization, a form will be submitted to the Department of Human Services and other appropriate authorities.

Rivendell keeps an illness and injuries log in the front office.

Inclusivity Policy

At Rivendell School, we actively promote inclusive practices to best meet the needs of our school's children, families, and staff. Children are welcome to attend our school regardless of

background, culture, religion, or gender. Through inclusive practices, we strive to promote positive attitudes toward both similarities and differences in each other. Curriculum, activities, books, and materials are used to reflect the diversity of all children and families throughout the world. Staff are encouraged to incorporate the following Basic Principles: Everybody has a Culture, Engage in Multiple Perspectives, We Build Cultural Bridges, Empowering Our Heads, Hearts, and Hands, and Co-Responsibility. These Principles are woven through the curriculum as well as day to day conversations and problem solving.

Through Rivendell School's approach to individualized education, we will provide modifications and adaptations to help all children achieve academic and personal excellence in our program. Rivendell School will work with families who have learners on 504 plans to make appropriate accommodations to best meet the learner's needs. We also assist parents and guardians with securing additional help and resources when there are concerns about the child's development. If Rivendell is unable to meet the needs of a student, the staff will assist parents and guardians in finding a program where those services are provided.

Library Information

Rivendell is proud to have an extensive library available to our students. We offer over 10,000 books which are organized in a child-friendly manner (nonfiction, picture books, chapter books, series). We also have a collection of parent resource books. All students are issued a library card. Our younger students are able to select books from a book cart twice a week, and our older students can search the entire collection on our computer kiosk. The library is run by volunteers and the majority of the books in our collection are purchased through book fairs or donated.

Lost and Found

Our lost and found box is located by the double doors leading out to the playground. Any items left out at the end of each school day will be placed in the box. Unclaimed items in the lost and found box will be donated to Goodwill at the end of each semester. Small or valuable items may also be held at the front desk.

Lost or Missing Children Procedure

If the child count sheet or attendance book does not match the number of children present, the teacher will immediately notify the Head of School. The Head of School and others will search the entire school campus. If the child is not located, the Head of School will notify the proper authorities, the parents and school management who will assist in any other actions that need to occur.

Lunch Program

Rivendell School offers a daily lunch option for students. A student-sized lunch is purchased from a local restaurant and then supplemented with milk, a fruit, and a cookie/small dessert. The program may be used daily or on an occasional basis. Tickets can be purchased and the menu can be found in the front office. The cost for each lunch is \$7.00. Tickets need to be deposited in the collection buckets when your child arrives for the day. If your child will arrive late and will need a hot lunch, you may call in an order until **8:45 AM** and we can add him/her to the count. Please contact the front office with any questions.

Students are welcome to bring lunch from home if they prefer. They are expected to eat most of their lunch. Please pack a reasonable amount of food considering your child's age, appetite and tastes. Consider packing foods that travel well and do not need refrigeration. Using a thermal lunch box and ice pack will help keep the food fresh and healthy. A beverage should be included and the lunch must be packed in easy-to-open containers. Please do not rely on the school to supply forks or spoons for your child's lunch. Additionally, students will not be allowed to use microwaves or electric kettles to prepare their food for lunch.

Medication at School and Medical Authorization Form

If your child requires medicine to be administered to them during the school day, please talk to the front office staff and have your child's pediatrician fill out a Medical Authorization Form. There are very specific procedures for medications which must be followed.

In general, all medications must have a doctor's and a parent's written permission; this includes all medicines including: asthma inhalers, Epi-pens, "over the counter" (OTC) drugs, cough medicines, homeopathic remedies, and pain medications. ALL medications must be in the original container with the pharmacy and doctor's name, child's name and prescription number clearly visible. Medicines with expired dates are not allowed.

Office Hours

The front office is open and staffed each school day from 8:00 AM until 4:00 PM. The office phone number is (970) 493-9052 and the fax number is (970) 493-9056.

Parking and Traffic Procedures

Due to the unique nature of Rivendell School, our parking lot becomes very busy during drop-off and pick-up hours. When you park and walk your child into school, please be cautious. Children may not walk to or from their car unattended.

Drop-off is from 8:00-8:30 AM. The school day begins promptly at 8:30 AM, so please make every effort to have your child arrive before then. Pick-up is at 3:00 PM for preschoolers (please come in and sign your child out) and 3:20 PM for all other students. Any child dropped off or picked up outside of regular school hours will be directed to Extended Care.

If you are choosing to take advantage of our outside pick-up option, please stay in your car and follow the line of traffic that circles the parking lot and lines up in front of the building by the pick-up benches. As kids gather their things and go outside, they will be seated on the benches. Two designated teachers or staff members will escort children to cars.

Pictures and Media

Occasionally pictures or video will be taken of Rivendell kids and shared on our website, Facebook page, or other social media. Parents are required to fill out a Parent Release Form for Media Recording to inform us of their preferences as to how their child's image may be used. This form is provided in your enrollment paperwork. If you have any questions regarding pictures or media usage, please contact the admissions specialist.

Recess and Breaks

Recess time is an important time for children to learn and develop social skills, as well as release energy and exercise. It's also a time for Rivendell students to interact with mixed age groups. Each day students have a half hour of recess time on the playground in the morning and then another hour during lunch. The school provides balls and other equipment to play with outside.

Recycling

Rivendell is a proud member of ClimateWise, an international group dedicated to using our natural resources wisely and protecting the environment. Recycling bins are available in each classroom. We strive to teach children to be responsible for our earth.

School Activities

Through the years Rivendell has created many fun traditions and annual activities. A few of these are the Book Partners, Field Day, Fun Fest, Fun Run, Group Sing, Musicals, the Science Fair, and the Spring Program.

In addition to these, Rivendell hosts a variety of school activities throughout the course of the school year. These events will be posted in our weekly newsletter, as well as at the school.

School Safety

It is important for our families and community to understand the expectations around how we operate our school to keep our children and adults safe. Please be sure to understand and adhere to the following practices:

- Always enter the building through the “front” doors (East doors) before school and during school hours. Use the “dock” doors (South doors) after 4:00 PM.
- All doors will be locked at all times with the exception of the front door, which will be unlocked during drop-off and pick-up times. Please ring the bell for assistance if the door is locked.
- All visitors must check-in at the front office by signing in.
- If you are picking your child up early or dropping them off late during the school day, please be sure to document this in writing at the front office.
- All volunteers who work with individual children or small groups of children must adhere to a background check. See the volunteer section for more information
- If you notice any suspicious behavior at Rivendell or around Rivendell, we would like to encourage you to let a staff member know immediately. As always, in case of an emergency, call 9-1-1.

School-wide Interdisciplinary Topics and Concept-based Learning

Science and Social Studies are taught in school-wide interdisciplinary units each year. Universal concepts are explored through a conceptual “lens” as students learn the content. Topics are woven into other content areas such as reading, writing, and mathematics in an interdisciplinary format.

Sample Universal Concepts (one per year)

Change · Exploration · Order vs. Chaos · Power · Systems · Conflict · Force & Influence ·
Patterns · Structure · Relationships

Generalizations about universal concepts are developed by students and used for reflections about learning.

School-wide Interdisciplinary Unit Topics

<p><u>Year 1 (2024-25)</u></p> <p>Community Connections Ancient Greece and Rome The Democratic Process Systems of the Body Europe Colonial America/American Revolution Plants Dinosaurs/Birds</p>	<p><u>Year 2</u></p> <p>Community Connections The Solar System Maya/Inca/Aztec Central/South America Land Forms & Geology (Colorado Geography) First Nations Australia and Oceania Mammals</p>
<p><u>Year 3</u></p> <p>Community Connections Oceans Ancient Asia Asia Simple Machines Westward Expansion Colorado History Insects</p>	<p><u>Year 4</u></p> <p>Community Connections Weather Egypt Economics Africa Industrial Revolution/Immigration The Senses Freshwater Habitats</p>

Topics are repeated every four years. Students learn discipline-based skills within the context of these topics. For example, map-reading skills and geology are taught consistently each year in our “continent” topic studies.

Supplies

A required and non-refundable supply fee is to be paid each semester (August and January). This supply fee for each student covers the cost of all the supplies students need from day-to-day for classroom learning. There might be times (such as Science Fair or culminating

projects) when a family must pay for additional supplies. Students are expected to provide their own lunch box, water bottle, and book bag.

Right to Search Policy

Should a child be suspected of inappropriate conduct, such as stealing another student's belongings, Rivendell has the right to search backpacks and lunch boxes. This is to ensure safety and to uphold our policy of keeping ourselves, others, and our belongings safe.

Technology Policies

Rivendell School provides computer and Internet access to support the educational mission of the school and to enhance the curriculum and learning opportunities for students and school staff. The school will employ a number of strategies in order to maximize learning opportunities and reduce risks associated with the Internet and the use of technology. Students will be taught about Internet safety, copyright law and fair use, and netiquette.

Computer & Email Account Policy

Rivendell provides computing devices and internet access for students. Students are responsible for using these resources in a responsible, ethical and legal manner.

Expectations:

- Accounts are property of Rivendell and we have access to all email, documents, and web history
- Assume anything you share or send to someone may be seen by others
- In an effort to safeguard your internet browsing, Rivendell provides filters for inappropriate material on the internet

Do Not:

- Share passwords
- Send or create bullying, threatening or obscene messages or documents
- Use or attempt to access inappropriate websites or apps
- Attempt to access unauthorized accounts, files or resources, or work around any security restrictions
- Sign up for online services (other than Rivendell-approved) with a Rivendell account
- Use services at school that required you to sign in with a personal account
- Post personal information online
- Deface or attempt to modify hardware
- Install, modify or change software or settings
- Use Rivendell accounts for non-school purposes

Do:

- Be conscientious and remember to sign out; be polite and sign friends out

- Contact staff immediately about inappropriate material. Keep evidence (emails, documents or error messages), don't close or delete
- Use printers mindfully and don't waste paper and ink

Consequences for violation of this policy may include, but are not limited to:

- Restrictions on school computer use
- Loss of email use
- Loss of entire Rivendell account access

Laptop Agreement

This policy is given to students when they begin to use laptops in the classroom. There is no need to sign the form in this handbook, but please use this as a reference for the future.

Because laptops are fragile and require additional care the following practices will be requested of each student:

1. I will charge the laptop immediately after daily use.
2. I will protect the screen from scratches.
3. I will keep food and beverages away from laptops.
4. I will not mark or write on the laptop, charger, or cabinet.
5. I will never take a photo, video, or audio recording of anyone without their permission.
6. I will request teacher permission to:
 - Use headphones
 - Play educational games
 - Play music, CDs or DVDs
 - Register for online (class-related) accounts

Misuse of Laptops

The school expects students to abide by these computer usage guidelines. Violations of these will result in disciplinary action. Normal wear and tear is expected, but the student and parent will be responsible for repair or replacement of a damaged or lost system.

Tuition and Fees: 2024-25 School year

The yearly tuition rate is paid in ten installments. The first of the ten payments due in June (or immediately upon enrollment if after June). The remaining nine payments are charged monthly September through May.

PRESCHOOL PROGRAM

Full-day Academic Program	Total Tuition	Monthly Payment
5 Days* 8:00am-3:00pm	\$16,460	\$1,646
4 Days 8:00am-3:00pm	\$15,930	\$1,593

ELEMENTARY PROGRAM: YOUNGER KIDS, MIDDLE KIDS AND OLDER KIDS

Per Student	Total Tuition	Monthly Payment
1 st Student - Full Tuition	\$12,950	\$1,295
2 nd Student - 10% Discount*	\$11,655	\$1,165.50
3 rd Student - 15% Discount*	\$11,007.50	\$1,100.75

**Multiple child discounts apply to the oldest child's tuition rate.*

REQUIRED FEES

Registration Fee* (non-refundable)	\$150*	Due upon registration
Supply Fee^ (non-refundable)	Preschool: \$150 Younger Kids: \$150 Middle Kids: \$175 Older Kids: \$200	Paid twice each year in August and January

**Registration fees for additional children are \$75 per child.*

^ Preschool Supply Fee (per semester): 5 days: \$150; 4 days \$130

EXTENDED CARE (optional)

Extended Care	\$10/Hour	Billed monthly
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Valuables at School

Students are encouraged to leave any valuables (cash, expensive jewelry, electronics, etc.) at home. Rivendell is not responsible for items that may be lost, broken, or stolen on our premises.

Visitor Guidelines

All visitors to Rivendell School must sign in at the front office. Cell phone usage is prohibited while working with children or in the classroom. If a visitor will be volunteering regularly at Rivendell, they must submit to a background check and abide by all other volunteer policies. (See website.)

Parental Involvement

Volunteer Opportunities

Rivendell School values the time and energy our families and friends give to make our school a great place. We love having volunteers in the building because we know that the benefit to students is so great. Are you interested in volunteering at Rivendell in a very specific way that is in line with your talents, passions or profession? Consider volunteering as a way to plug in and get involved!

Rivendell's Admissions and Communications Specialist is in charge of coordinating parent volunteers.

A volunteer handbook is provided in the school office. The volunteer handbook has all current information about and expectations for volunteers.

Rivendell Parent Association

The purpose of the Rivendell Parent Association (RPA) is to formally organize parent volunteers to promote, organize, and carry out events and activities as determined by Rivendell School. This group of parent volunteers is led by the Admissions and Communications Specialist and the Head of School. The RPA meets regularly to discuss upcoming school-wide and community events.

Board of Directors

The leadership of the Rivendell Board of Directors is extremely important. These individuals commit to keeping the school financially sound; advise the Head of School about good practices of financial management and distribution; determine the availability of dollars for raises and other compensations; oversee facility management; deal with legal issues and insurance; listen to the Head of School for input about specific issues such as facility enhancements, playground development and fundraising opportunities.

Members of the Board serve three-year terms. Perhaps the most significant aspect of Board service is the fact that these people volunteer their time and expertise in the service of the school. This is a testimony to their commitment to the vision of Rivendell and contributes significantly to the culture of participation, ownership and responsibility.

A list of current board members is available on our website:

(<http://www.rivendell-school.org/about-us/board-of-directors/>). Board meeting minutes are available upon request.

If you are interested in volunteering on the Board, please contact the Board Chair for further information.

Ways to Support Our School

In addition to volunteering there are a variety of ways to support Rivendell (See our Support Webpage, <https://www.rivendell-school.org/support-rivendell/>).

- Many families participate in our Scrip gift card program (local grocery stores, Barnes and Noble, Starbucks, Walmart, iTunes, etc.), Target Stores have a rebate program if you charge purchases on their Red Card. Please ask the store for more details. For more information on rebate programs, check at the front office.
- Rivendell also holds several fundraising events during the school year, along with Scholastic book fairs. We are happy to accept cash or check donations.
- If you are interested in donating books, our library is always in need of new or used books, to either replace or supplement our inventory. We also accept craft and school material donations. Please do not donate an item you may want back at a later date.

Thank you for supporting Rivendell!

Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA)

Dear Rivendell Parents, Teachers, Employees, and Contractors,

In compliance with AHERA, Rivendell School of Northern Colorado is required to notify parents, teachers, and all other building occupants that an Asbestos Management Plan (AMP) is available to them in the office. The AMP details the location of asbestos in our building and provides a record of inspections, re-inspections, periodic surveillance, and removal or management of asbestos as necessary.

Periodic surveillance of Asbestos Containing Building Material (ACBM) is conducted by staff every 6 months, and a re-inspection of ACBM is conducted once every 3 years by a qualified and licensed environmental consultant. Our most recent inspection was conducted in January, 2022 by RLH Engineering, Inc. We have minimal ACBM in our building, and at the time of our latest inspection all asbestos was found to be non-friable and undisturbed.

At Rivendell School it is our top priority to make our building a safe place where students can learn. If you would like more detailed information about our AMP please call the Rivendell office at (970)493-9052 or email our Facility Director, Bryce Warren, at bryce@rivendell-school.org

Sincerely,
Bryce Warren
Rivendell School Facility Manager



STANDARD RESPONSE PROTOCOL

PARENT GUIDANCE

In the event of a live incident, parents may have questions about their role.

SECURE

“Get Inside. Lock outside doors”



Secure is called when there is something dangerous outside of the building. Students and staff are brought into the building and the outside doors will be locked. The school might display the Building is Secured poster on entry doors or nearby windows. Inside, it will be business as usual.

SHOULD PARENTS COME TO THE SCHOOL DURING A SECURE EVENT?

Probably not. Every effort is made to conduct classes as normal during a secure event. Additionally, parents may be asked to stay outside during a Secure event.

WHAT IF PARENTS NEED TO PICK UP THEIR STUDENT?

Depending on the situation, it may not be safe to release the student. As the situation evolves, Secure might change to a Monitored Entry and/or Controlled Release.

WILL PARENTS BE NOTIFIED WHEN A SCHOOL GOES INTO SECURE?

When a secure event is brief or the hazard is non-violent, like a wild animal on the playground, there may not be a need to notify parents while the Secure is in place.

With longer or more dangerous events, the school should notify parents that the school has increased their security.

LOCKDOWN

“Locks, Lights, Out of Sight”



A Lockdown is called when there is something dangerous inside of the building. Students and staff are trained to enter or remain in a room that can be locked, and maintain silence.

A Lockdown is only initiated when there is an active threat inside or very close to the building.



SHOULD PARENTS COME TO THE SCHOOL DURING A LOCKDOWN?

The natural inclination for parents is to go to the school during a Lockdown. Understandable, but perhaps problematic. If there is a threat inside the building, law enforcement will be responding. It is unlikely that parents will be granted access to the building or even the campus. If parents are already in the school, they will be instructed to Lockdown as well.

SHOULD PARENTS TEXT THEIR STUDENTS?

The school recognizes the importance of communication between parents and students during a Lockdown event. Parents should be aware though, during the initial period of a Lockdown, it may not be safe for students to text their parents. As the situation resolves, students may be asked to update their parents on a regular basis.

In some cases, students may be evacuated and transported off-site for a student-parent reunification.

WHAT ABOUT UNANNOUNCED DRILLS?

The school may conduct unscheduled drills, however it is highly discouraged to conduct one without announcing that it as a drill. That's called an unannounced drill and can cause undue concern and stress.

Parents should recognize that the school will always inform students that it is a drill during the initial announcement.

It's important to differentiate between a **drill** and an exercise. A drill is used to create the “Muscle Memory” associated with a practiced action. There is no simulation of an event; this is simply performing the action. An exercise simulates an actual event to test the capacity of personnel and equipment.

CAN PARENTS OBSERVE OR PARTICIPATE IN THE DRILLS?

The school welcomes parents who wish to observe or participate in drills.

